



The TURNTABLE

June 2011

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PAID & VOLUNTEER STAFF OF RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK

Upcoming Events

June 2

Ladies Luncheon
11:30am Covers Ranch
Call Marge 533-4595

June 11 & 12

Small Engine Club

June 19

Father's Day

July 3 thru 9

National Model RR's
Association Convention
Sacramento

July 7

Ladies Luncheon
11:30am Papa's Roost

August 6

Singing Rails Festival w/
Laurie Lewis & The
Right Hands, also local
favorites Coyote Hill

Tickets On Sale!

for our

2nd Annual

Singing Rails Festival

online or at our Depot
Store. Volunteers and
staff working the event
will receive free
admission.

Grammy Award Winner
Laurie Lewis &
The Right Hands
Appearing August 6.

Please join us and sup-
port this fundraising
event for our Park. De-
pot Store:

209-984-3953

On line:

railtown1897.org



The Shay Mystique

The current Sierra Railway #2 is commonly called "The Shay" or "The No. 2." With a tractive effort of 40,000 lbs., it is estimated that it can pull 7 cars, but we haven't proven it. The Shay No. 2 is a very powerful locomotive. One of 2,768 geared engines built by Lima Locomotive Works for logging, it was originally designed to pull very heavy loads on steep grades. Apparently dependability and speed were the trade off. At Railtown, we can speak from experience; Shays require frequent maintenance. It's not exaggerating to say that after each weekend of operation, the Shay requires one to two days of maintenance to recover. Lots of jokes are



made about picking up parts along the track. But that only happened once last year. The part was a small wedge, and amazingly, the fire patrol crew actually spotted it. Shays were produced and shipped throughout the world, but only 118 still exist today. That would make this a rare locomotive. California, with its lumber industry utilized many Shays, and there are still 18 in the state: three in Tuolumne County and two of those are at Railtown. Invented originally by Ephram Shay, a Civil War Veteran and eccentric inventor and logger from Harbor Springs, Michigan the design was improved upon and patented by Lima Locomotive Works, who produced the locomotives from 1878-1945, under different variations of the Lima name. Railtown's Shay was originally built for Hutchinson Lumber Company on the Feather River and was owned by Georgia Pacific Company at the time of the building of Lake Oroville, when the railway was flooded and the locomotive was given to the State of California. Over time, it made its way to Jamestown, prior to its advent as a park, and eventually became park property. The second Shay on the property is the local West Side Lumber Company No. 7. Owned by Dr. Nichols, this locomotive has been on site since 1997 and was moved near the machine shop in 2010. These locomotives are unique in many ways, but most dramatically they do not have side rods, and don't make the familiar "chug, chug" noise of the side rod/piston style locomotives. Shays have smaller drivers, which are driven by gears on each wheel. This means that wheels on both sides can grip the track at the same time. It also means the locomotive moves at a much slower speed than most rod locomotives. They were ideal for short runs on steep grades with heavy loads. At Railtown, we have a lot of fun running our Shay and informed visitors come from far and wide to appreciate this unique locomotive in action.

A Curator's Dilemma

Thank goodness we have so many volunteers that have so many years of service here, enabling us to ask questions about the images we find. Often, (more often than not) we find photos and slides with no information about who, when or why. When we are removed from the picture taker, we only have an image to go by, so we must seek out your input and memories. Then we can write up the information, and when your great-great grandson comes looking for images of you, we can say, "Here is your great-great grandpa driving engine #28!"

Recently, we have unearthed a large number of slides and photos that have just been waiting around for someone to pay attention to them for years and years. Now that we have a place to spread out and organize and we have a very nice slide scanner, we can dust off these images and try and decipher what they are and where they came from.

Members and volunteers should be pleased to know that we have already digitized several photo albums from volunteers who have left us for that station in the sky. Digital access means we can easily share and browse images without actually touching the original prints. This ensures that the originals are stored nicely and stay intact, escaping any damage from the acids in fingerprints, or any kind of accident.

So, how is your photo collection at home? Have you carefully written the who, what, when, where and why on the backs of the prints? Have you already forgotten some of that information? You see, a curator's dilemma is also everyone's dilemma. Everyone is a curator of a fashion, because we all have material possessions that remain long after we have boarded that last train.

Lisa Smithson

State Park Curator I



The #2's Younger Sister

Did you know our #2 Shay has an almost identical twin? She now resides at the Cass Scenic Railroad State Park nestled in the hills of West Virginia. The Shay #3 was built in 1923, one year after our #2 and also went to the Hutchison Lumber Company, Feather Falls, California. Now known as the Cass #11, it is used in their excursion rides. Invented to do the impossible, the Shay logging locomotive was

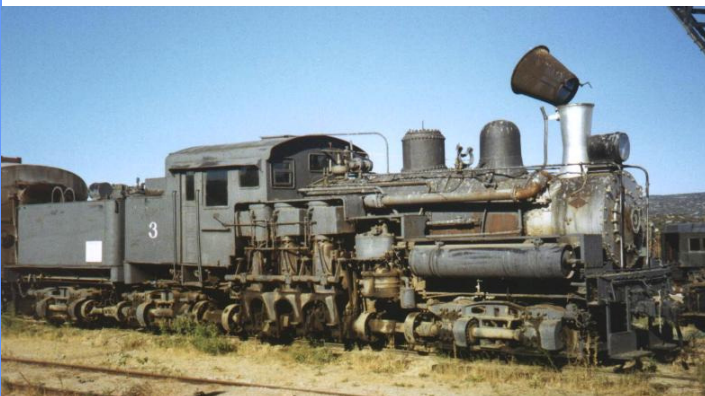


Photo of the Shay #3 before it was restored and placed back in service.

designed to climb the steepest grades, swing around hairpin curves and negotiate frail, temporary tracks. In addition, they had to haul incredibly heavy loads from the woods to mill. Power was all-important. A working steam locomotive is rare enough these days. But two sisters managing to dodge the scrapper's pile and still making it out alive and breathing with practically identical recent histories, is nigh-improbable. That's pretty cool, if I do say so myself. It would be neat if we were able to get them together for a family reunion or something, don't you think? Just wishful thinking, I suppose. (submitted by James Kennard)

Nancy Bull – Volunteer of The Month

This month we'd like everyone to say hello to Nancy Bull, Railtown's volunteer of the month. Nancy is entering her third season as a Railtown volunteer. She and her fiancé, Bob Ide, answered our ad in the Union Democrat looking for new volunteers. They found Railtown's volunteer program a good fit for their desire to make a difference and help out State Parks. Bob and Nancy also volunteer at Stage 3 Theatre and occasionally for events with the Humane Society. Nancy was born and raised in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, then moved to California in 1959 with her family. She found Tuolumne County a lovely place to live and moved here in 1976. She is a graduate of the Bryant and Stratton School of Commerce and has been working as a secretary and bookkeeper for more than 30 years. Her hobbies include her cats, dogs and birds and she also loves to collect rocks and minerals for her private collection. At Railtown she has worked as a greeter and helps wherever needed, from selling popcorn to working as an extra car attendant on the excursion rides. These days you will most often catch her working the membership table on weekends and opening up conversations with visitors, showing interpretive items displayed on the table. The items relate to our railroad such as a spike, a rivet, a jar of the oil we use on the locomotives, a piece of coal used in our blacksmith shop, or once used to fuel the engines. It's very much like the show-and-tell we used to do in school. She also displays a number of historical photographs which visitors find fascinating. The items she says visitors find most interesting is a fashion notebook Nancy assembled showing clothing fashions from 1897 to 1910. She says "greeting new visitors is always exciting. You never know when you're going to meet a new



foreign country or make a new friend locally from Tuolumne County." One recent visitor, a lady from India viewed clothing in a photo from 1906 and remarked that she had worn the same outfit as a school girl in India. This connection really enhanced that person's visit to Railtown. Isn't that what it's all about? Nancy is piloting a much-needed activity at our park, finding new ways to interpret our history, open up conversations and connecting with visitors, enhancing their experience. What does she like most about Railtown? "It's just an absolute fabulous group of people! I consider them all my friends. They've enhanced my life and given me a lot of joy."

National Model Railroaders Convention Coming To Sacramento, July 3 thru 9

For all our model railroad enthusiasts, mark your calendars! Sacramento will be the home of the combined 2011 National Conventions of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) and the National Association of S Gauge (NASG). That's right - two national conventions in one. The EXTRA 2011 WEST CONVENTION promises to be The Unconventional Convention! Sacramento has long been a railroad town. The Central Pacific Railroad began building eastward from Sacramento in 1863, and celebrated the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad at Promontory, Utah, six years later. It was home to the vast Southern Pacific Railroad Shops. It is now home to the California State Railroad Museum, one of the premier railroad museums in the country. Located in Old Sacramento, less than 1-½ miles from the Convention Hotel. Old Sacramento has more buildings of historic value (53) condensed into its 28 acres, than most areas of similar size in the West. More information on line at: www.x2011west.org

A Special Thank You!

The Kitchen Floor

A big thank you to David Deutsch (project leader), Jerry Tannhauser, Darryl Bramlette, James Kennard, Robert Staggs and all who helped contribute to installing the new floor in the Kitchen Caboose. It's beautiful !

School Days

Our Wednesday school days went smooth thanks to the fine organizational ability of Joyce Presley and Robert Staggs (who stepped in for Joyce on the 25th). Thanks to you both and all the guides, trailers, car hosts, ticket agents, engine crew, fire patrol, demonstrators, stationmasters

Depot Store Shelves

A special thanks to Bill Baum and David Deutsch for their help building new shelves in our Depot Store !

Memberships

Wow! We've now made it pass the 1000 membership level in May! A special thanks to Ken Roy, Shirley Rainwater, Debbie Ulrey and all our volunteers who helped.

Ticket Agents

We'd like to also thank our volunteers who staff the Ticket Window on weekends: Shirley Rainwater, Laverne Coon, Debby Ulrey, Belva Bristol, Judy Nordstrom and Charlene McAndrews. Anyone interested in helping out with this vital and much needed activity, please call our volunteer line, 984-4408

Parade Float

Thanks to all our volunteers preparing and manning our Railtown parade float in the Motherlode Roundup , the Coulterville Coyote Howl and in the upcoming Copperopolis parade. Thanks to Al Lehr, Robert Staggs, Cliff Hughes, Allan & Judy Nordstrom, Roger Kirby (keyboard player) and everyone involved in representing Rail town 1897

Volunteers Needed!

The July 4th weekend will feature lots of activities all weekend. Greeters are needed for a number of special activities. We are also in need of volunteers to help decorate the platform and cars with our Red, White and Blue decorations. Jeanette Foster will be leading all willing volunteers on the Wednesday and Thursday before the big weekend. The National Model Railroaders will also be here. Entertainers 'Tater' Richard Learned will be on the trains Saturday and Monday and Jim Nelson from the Black Irish Band will be on our trains on Sunday. Please call our volunteer coordinator at 984-4408 if you can join us.

Just For Fun

- Two drunks were walking upgrade between the railroad tracks. One of them said, "this is longest stairway I have ever been on." To this, the other replied, "It's not the stairs that bother me, it's the low banister."
- A man and a woman, who had never met before, found themselves assigned to the same sleeping room on a transcontinental train. Although initially embarrassed and uneasy over sharing a room, the two are tired and fall asleep quickly -- he in the upper bunk and she in the lower. At 2:00 a.m., he leans over and gently wakes the woman, saying, "Ma'am, I'm sorry to bother you, but would you be willing to reach into the closet to get me a second blanket? I'm awfully cold." "I have a better idea," she replies. "Just for tonight, let's pretend that we're married." "Wow! That's a great idea!" he exclaims. "Good," she replies. "Get your own damn blanket."
- A passenger train is creeping along, slowly. Finally it creaks to a halt. A passenger sees a conductor walking by outside. "What's going on?" she yells out the window. "Cow on the track!" replies the conductor. Ten minutes later, the train resumes its slow pace. Within five minutes, however it stops again. The woman sees the same conductor walk by again. She leans out the window and yells, "What happened? Did we catch up with the cow again?"



Alexa Melville & Chris Whitney, members of our Depot Store Staff



Jeanette Foster & Eugene Merritt in a sweeping contest?



'Dressed to the Nines'
Hal & Janet Montano



Tom Keyes
having a conversation
with an old fence

Railtown Snapshots



Sam Cook demonstrating for
visitors in our
belt driven machine shop



Bill Vail fires up the forge for
School Days



Park Ranger
Kim Baker
sampling the
velocipede



John & Natalie Stier
selling popcorn on
School Days



Engine Crew
trainee James Judnich
with George Sapp



Ray Azevedo &
Bernie Laursen
mending fences



Carol Mabe
tackling the oven
in the Kitchen Caboose



Our beautiful Tulip Tree
next to the Crew Caboose
blossoms In May



RAILTOWN 1897
State Historic Park

PO Box 1250

Jamestown, CA 95327

Return Service Requested

TO:



Depot Store- (209) 984-3953

Docent Hotline- (209) 984-4408

Docent Site- <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers>

Railtown Blog- www.railtown1897.wordpress.com



Railtown Paid and Volunteer Staff Contact Information

Newsletter submissions: RailtownNews@parks.ca.gov

(all area codes are 209)

Kim Baker , Park Superintendent	984-4622	kbaker@parks.ca.gov
George Sapp , Railroad Restoration Lead Worker (DSLE)	774-6368	gsapp@parks.ca.gov
Kevin Zimmerman , Asst. Railroad Operations Manager	557-0294	kzimmerman@parks.ca.gov
Lisa Smithson , State Park Curator I (DER)	984-3119	lsmithson@parks.ca.gov
Ryan Richelson , Maintenance Supervisor	984-3115	rrichelson@parks.ca.gov
Rob Buchanan , Park Maintenance Worker I	984-3115	rbuchanan@parks.ca.gov
Danny Taylor , Park Maintenance Assistant	984-3115	dtaylor@parks.ca.gov
Dave Rainwater , Park Aid & Volunteer Coordinator	984-4408	darainwater@parks.ca.gov
Kevin Zimmerman , Engine Crew Caller	557-0294	kzimmerman@parks.ca.gov
Ron White , Stationmaster and Asst. Crew Caller for Car Hosts	551-7087	rbarryw@att.net
Rick Guantone , Crew Caller Fire Patrol	763-2617	guantone@comcast.net
Laverne Coon , Special Decorations and Ticket Agent Caller	984-4408	

Newsletter Available in Alternative Format on Request